

Your Roadmap to Values Based-Decision Making: Improving your Relationship with Social Media

Step 1: Go to "settings" on your phone & calculate weekly social media use across all apps. Multiple by four to get your monthly total.

Step2: Think critically about this number. Are the benefits you receive from this time spent commensurate to the number of hours you invest? (*Yes, your time is an investment & is the ultimate nonrenewable resource*).

For example:

Let's say you spend about 10 hours per week (40 per month) on social media & you're primarily here for mental health resources.

Are you seeing these benefits show up in your life in a **measurable & observable way?**

Are you sleeping better, feeling less anxious, feeling more motivated, & feeling more relaxed as a direct result of those 40 hours per month?


Yes!


BARB SHEPARD
Licensed Mental Health Counselor


No...

if Yes...

Great! You already have a handle on how you want to spend your time & you are living in alignment with your values.



When you are clear on how you **truly** want to spend your time based on what you **value**, it becomes MUCH easier to break the scrolling habit.

It's essential to fill your time with the things that **matter to you**, so that you are so busy living your life that social media ends up being a smaller part of your day **rather than the main event**.

if No...

Step 3: Let's explore your values further with some journaling prompts.

If I valued my time more, what would that look like?

What else would I be doing instead? Think hobbies; activities that are good for your health; people you would like to make an effort to see more.

What are the **opportunity costs** to my time spent on social media?
(Relationships, finances, personal development, sleep, etc).



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Licensed Mental Health Counselor

Strategies to Reduce Screen Time

Step 4: Now that you're clear on how you want to spend your time based on what truly matters to you, let's talk strategies to reduce screen time.



Clean up who you follow...

Revisit what matters to you (family, learning, etc.) & only follow people who bring you closer to these values. If entertainment is important to you, perhaps you limit how many celebrities you follow. The less that's going on when you open the app, the less enticing scrolling will be.



...and who follows you.

This mainly applies to people who don't use social media for business purposes. Susie from middle school who you will never see again does not need to follow you. Nor does your ex. You can force people to unfollow you without them being notified. This is not mean-spirited. It's a healthy boundary for your mental real estate & preserves your privacy. When you have less followers, you'll be less concerned about your online presence & can show up more fully *in your actual life*.



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Strategies to Reduce Screen Time



Explore other ways to access content from people you follow outside of social media.

Think books, podcasts, blogs, newsletters, & virtual or in-person services.



Set screen time limits in settings on your phone.

You can choose your limit for each app (say 30 minutes on Instagram per day) & then your phone will prompt you when your time is up.



Prepare to be uncomfortable.

Picking up your phone & scrolling feels like second nature; it will take *time & willingness to make new habits*. Anything worth having requires effort & patience.



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Final Thoughts:

Social media has benefits. It's amazing how it connects all of us; exposes us to new ideas; and is a free global marketing resource. I am very grateful for certain aspects of social media.

It also has a shadow side. It's easy to fall victim to the addictive mechanisms that intend to keep us hooked on scrolling. When we are addicted to anything, there is always a cost to that. Being more absorbed in social media than your life has a high risk of costing you your ***peace of mind***.

In order to enjoy the benefits social media & protect your peace of mind, there are a few things to keep in mind. You must become **extremely clear** on your values & make decisions from that space. You have to decide that you are the master of your attention & time. You must take concrete steps to ensure that you are only investing your time in spaces that serve **your life's higher purpose**.

Humbly, BS